

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The above claims do not have any amendments and are merely a courtesy clean copy for the record.

Applicant appreciates the indicated allowability of claims 4, 6, and 7. Allowance of all the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 3 and are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Alldredge et al., US 4,144,965 ('965 or Alldredge).

However a review of the '965 reference and of the invention shows that there are substantial differences between the conveying structure of '965 and the invention described in claim 1 of the present application.

Alldredge relates to a flexible conveyor comprising a carrying structure where the upper side is defined by the conveyor belts loading surface, and further that the carrying structure comprises a load-carrying chain and "a plurality of guide rods" (col. 3, l. 64-68); where each link in the chain on its upper side comprises conveyor belt support means and on its underside conveyor belt guidance means; and further that the loading surface of the conveyor belt is supported by the conveyor belt support means.

The present invention defines a flexible conveyor comprising a carrying structure and a conveyor belt where the upper side is defined by the conveyor belts loading surface. The carrying structure comprises a load-carrying chain, where each link in the

chain on its upper side comprises conveyor belt support means, and on its underside conveyor belt guidance means. Each load-carrying chain link is articulately joined for movement in three dimensions relative to the adjacent links and wherein the loading surface of the conveyor belt is supported by the conveyor belt support means, and wherein means are provided in each end of the flexible conveyor about which the conveyor belt is guidably turned.

Nothing in Alldredge describes, teaches or suggests, the following claimed features which includes:

- 1) each load-carrying chain link articulately joined for movement in three dimensions relative to the adjacent links;
- 2) means provided in each end of the flexible conveyor about which the conveyor belt is guidably turned.

Even if the Examiner may contend (regarding 2 above) it could be subjectively assumed that means are implicitly provided for turning the belt, however, the Examiner cannot show any basis in '965 (regarding 1 above) for the claimed three-dimensional construction of the conveying structure, because '965 does not describe, teach or even remotely contemplate such a unique feature and therefore cannot even by inherency hint at the claimed construction.

Therefore, the present invention is not anticipated by Alldredge and the invention as disclosed in claim 1 is patentable over Alldredge.

Furthermore, the provision of articulation in three

dimensions of the load-carrying structure cannot be obvious at the time the invention was made by a person having ordinary skill in the art to which the invention pertains, for the following reasons:

The load carrying structure, described in '965 comprises the horizontally parallel tracks 25,26, 28 and 29 (see col. 3, 1. 58 - 66, fig. 2 and 3). These tracks are arranged on a carrying structure comprising the support links (33, see col. 5, lines 7 - 26) which links are connected by pins (52) such that the links (33) may pivot.

From the description and especially the '965 drawings it is evident that this construction only allows articulation in one plane, whereas the present invention allows articulation in three dimensions, i.e. to either side as well as up or down in relation to the transport direction. Especially this unique feature, as explained in the present specification, enables the conveyor to articulate in three dimensions and is important because there are many uses when it is desirable to be able to adjust the loading/unloading level of the conveyor in relation to the loading/unloading position of the goods, baggage, luggage, or the like, transported on the conveyor. The personnel working, for example in cargo bays of aircraft, trains, etc., often have to load/unload the cargo in cramped spaces. For these applications and many others it is advantageous to be able to adjust the working height of the conveyor, such that undesirable working conditions are avoided.

Furthermore it is often not possible to achieve a level surface on which to arrange a conveyor, in that cargo bays of these types of crafts often are arranged with respect to other features of the crafts. In those situations the cargo is traditionally man-handled to the cargo hatch, where the cargo is loaded onto a conveying structure. Therefore by providing articulation in three dimensions it is achieved that the conveyor may be manipulated into places where hitherto it was only possible to man-handle the cargo.

This aspect, or the solution proposed in the main claim, is not suggested nor hinted at in the '965 document. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art of conveyors, furthermore so, as none of the available prior art documents suggests solutions which even remotely address the same or corresponding problem.

Consequently it is submitted that the present invention as defined in independent claim 1 is not anticipated by Alldredge et al. nor by any other document belonging to the available state of the art, and the application should consequently be allowed.

Claim 8 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Alldredge and Lachner (US 4,844,238).

As pointed out above Alldredge does not describe, teach nor suggest the claims invention. Therefore, any further combination with secondary references will also lead away from the present

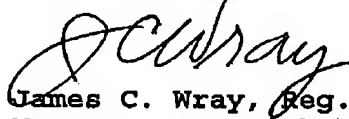
claims.

As claim 8 is dependent from allowable claim 1, claim 8 is patentable over the references.

Nothing in the Alldredge, with or without Lachner, teaches or suggests the claimed features. Therefore, the reference(s) cannot anticipate nor render obvious the present invention as claimed.

Since Applicant has presented a novel, unique and non-obvious invention, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully,



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